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Abstract

This article analyses the implementation process of Beijing's current urban master plan using the background of modernisation theory. The line of thought behind the new urban master plan follows a high-modernist ideology embedded in an environment of reflexive modernity. Intermediate goals of the urban master plan are to tighten population control and increase social legibility of the city, providing an additional explanation for state-led urbanisation besides economic reasons. Urban planning is thus used as a social control mechanism and has emerged as a new means to maintain social distinction, creating new forms of exclusion. It can be observed that disruptive Mao era style pushes are still being employed in the policy cycle even today. This becomes evident from the implementation style of urban planning, where campaign-style and regularised implementation methods are complementing each other. This is corroborated through documentary analysis, interviews, and fieldwork conducted by the author.

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Keywords

Beijing, urban planning, high modernism, campaign-style policy implementation

Introduction

On 18 November 2017, a fire devastated a multipurpose building complex in Xinjian Village Number 2, Xihongmen Town (西红门镇新建二村, *Xihongmenzhen*

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Xinjian'ercun) in Beijing's Daxing (大兴) district. This fire killed nineteen people, among which were eight children, and injured another eight people. Subsequently, the inhabitants of the village were expelled from their homes at short notice and their houses demolished, because authorities deemed their housing situation to be unsafe. This rash expulsion of inhabitants sparked outrage among Beijing's population and caused broad media coverage.

It seems odd that such abrupt measures are still possible in a time when much focus is laid on regularisation, for example through strategic planning (战略规划, *zhanlüe guihua*) and top-level design (顶层设计, *dingceng sheji*). This fundamental tension will be examined through the example of urban planning in Beijing, because the expulsion and subsequent measures had been justified with current urban planning documents.

China's urbanisation has often been analysed from its economic incentives, and has been interpreted through neoliberalism or urban entrepreneurialism, for example. This article adds that its non-economic incentives, such as governance-related ones, can be understood through a framework of high modernism. Additionally, in order to understand the Chinese state's active role in urbanisation, this article adds that population control is also an important factor, linking up discussions of how hierarchies are created through urban planning and how state power is reproduced through it.

The Daxing example shows that a combination of high modernism as ideological basis and campaign-style implementation as practice is employed to consolidate power. More specifically, this article analyses Beijing's urban master plan (2016–2035) in the context of modernisation. I argue that the Chinese government is employing high-modernist urban planning in the sense of Scott (1998) as a means for population control in its pursuit of modernisation. Its implementation practice follows institutionalised mobilisation (White, 1990). Through this, it creates new forms of social inclusion and exclusion.

The remainder of this article is organised as follows. First, I address current frameworks for interpreting Chinese urbanisation and how the state is an active player in it. The following section presents an outline of the article's conceptual approach based on modernisation theory. Then, I present an overview of urban planning in China as well as Beijing's current urban master plan and its objectives. In order to illustrate the implementation style and rationale, I will then focus on one specific policy, namely the "Function Relocation, Renovation and Promotion" Initiative ("疏解整治促提升"专项行动, *shujie zhengzhi cu tisheng zhuanxiang xingdong*, hereafter FRRPI) (People's Government of Beijing Municipality, 2017a), and how and why it was implemented through institutionalised mobilisation. Before concluding, I propose that the outcomes of both implementation practice and the underlying ideology of high modernism only serve to create more inequality, and that from an economic perspective, Beijing actually needs the people it is evicting.

The State's Role in Urbanisation

Because urbanisation is an important process in China's pursuit of modernisation, it is subject to scholarly discussion and interpreted in different ways. This article relates to

two strands of this literature. The first covers the state's very active role in urbanisation. Whereas classical urbanisation is understood as being generated by economic progress, in China, the state is a driving factor behind urban build-up and resident relocation.

Reasons for this *state-led urbanisation* are primarily economic (Lin and Yi, 2011). After the household responsibility system (包干制, *baoganzhi*) was introduced in the early 1980s, and the tax-sharing system (分税制, *fenshuizhi*) in 1994, strong incentives and opportunities existed for local governments to generate revenue through the so-called land finance. This procedure means profiting from the price differentials between land rent and land conversion cost or compensation for land expropriation (Gao et al., 2017; Lin and Ho, 2005; Ong, 2014; Tian and Yao, 2018; Zhou, 2007). These economic incentives have led to urban planning now being used as a governance tool to generate growth (Tian et al., 2017). Additionally, they have created an entanglement of the local state and the market, eventually making the local state a market participant (Xu et al., 2009).

Many researchers have interpreted the state's behaviour as neoliberal urbanism, meaning privatisation and commodification of property, housing, and land markets in addition to economic growth as the primary goal of urbanisation. Concurrently, the prominent position of the local state mentioned above is also stressed in this strand of literature (Gao et al., 2017; He and Wu, 2009; Lin and Yi, 2011; Ong, 2014; Tian and Yao, 2018; Xu et al., 2009).

However, due to the state's dual role as a market actor and a regulator, the label of neoliberalism has been brought into question (Zhou et al., 2019). Therefore, following ideas such as Molotch (1976) "urban growth machine," the project of employing market strategies and simultaneously being a market actor has been described as "urban entrepreneurialism" (Wu, 2015) or "state entrepreneurialism" (Shin, 2009; Wu, 2018).

The entrepreneurialism model explains the phenomenon that the local state is able to occupy a monopolistic position, both in power and on the land market, while at the same time, neoliberal aspects such as commodification and marketisation of land are quite pronounced (Gao et al., 2017; Tomba, 2017). This article contributes to this body of literature by providing an additional explanatory model for the state's approach to some aspects of urban planning, namely high modernism in the sense of Scott (1998).

The second strand of literature is concerned with the role of urbanisation with respect to hierarchies and population control. As urbanisation itself is subject to market logic, transformations of socio-spatial hierarchies also become contingent on market logic, leading to spatial segregation (He and Wu, 2009; Zhou et al., 2019). Since the state has monopolistic power in urbanisation, it also dominates the development of spatial production (Wu, 2016).

This power over spatial production has also been deliberately used to create socio-spatial hierarchies by non-inclusion, for example through the household registration (户口, *hukou*) system (Zhang, 2018). Consequently, the state is employing urbanisation and functional planning as governance tools for social control, as well as for the reproduction of state power (Tomba, 2017). This article maintains that in addition to non-inclusion, active exclusion through spatial segregation is still an important factor in creating

hierarchies, and that urban planning is used as an instrument to accomplish that. Specifically, in the Chinese case, high modernism is used as the framework that enables this exclusionary hierarchisation for social control, and it is further facilitated through the centralist, top-level design structure of urban planning in China.

Additionally, state entrepreneurialism engenders problems through its concept of "accumulation by dispossession" (Zhou et al., 2019: 36). Redevelopment strategies frequently entail displacing residents, market-driven evictions, and compensating collective land owners far below market prices or even not at all, which leads to phenomena such as nail houses and landless peasants (Friedman 2017; Lin and Ho, 2005; Shin, 2009; Zhang, 2018). Tomba (2017) even contends that in China, "urbanization is an extremely large and systematic gentrification *project*," eventually constituting state-led gentrification (He, 2019). This article adds that besides the economic incentives, these redevelopment projects aim at population control and consolidation of state authority. Moreover, the article documents yet another case where residents' interests were ignored, and where they were confronted with legal uncertainties and forceful evictions.

Research Questions, Analytical Frameworks and Data

As discussed above, the state is very active in China's urbanisation. The state uses modernisation as its starting point for urbanisation and therefore modernisation discourses have been at the heart of Chinese urban planning for decades (Wu, 2015). Accordingly, we find a reference to modernisation in Chinese urban planning documents as early as the 1984 City Planning Ordinance (城市规划条例, *chengshi guihua tiaoli*). The ordinance states that it was established among other reasons to "construct our country's cities into modern, highly civilized socialist cities" (City Planning Ordinance, 1984: chap. 1, art. 1; translations mine unless noted otherwise). Indeed, already in the early Republican period, Shanghai, for example, was subject to modernist planning (Wu, 2015). Therefore, this article adopts a contemporary modernisation theory as its analytical lens.

Starting from this rationale, this article aims at answering the following two questions and discussing the proposed hypotheses. First, what factors resulted in the Daxing tenants being forcefully evicted and their homes demolished? I suggest that according to the high-modernist framework, urban planning was used as a measure for population control. Second, under a unified urban planning framework, how was it possible that different parts of the city received such different treatments? I suggest that campaign-style implementation was used as the method, which inherently includes varying strengths and efforts according to the location and circumstances.

In the case analysis, I adopted two analytical frameworks: for the theoretical classification, I used the concept of *high modernism* as introduced by Scott (1998), which falls under modernisation theory; for the analysis of the implementation practice, I used a framework of campaigns established by White (1990). The eviction of residents in Daxing represents an extreme example of eviction being rationalised through urban planning policies. Hence, an analysis of this case is fruitful in helping our understanding

of how population control is integrated into urban planning and how it engenders new forms of exclusion.

Data were collected through one semi-structured expert interview with a member of the Beijing Municipal People's Congress (Anonymous, 2018), four unstructured interviews with Beijing citizens, informal on-site observations, and a review of official documents and newspaper coverage between November 2017 and August 2018. I had a chance to conduct this research when I lived and studied in Beijing for half a year in 2017/18. Yet, due to the political sensitivity of the subject, no extensive or formal fieldwork was carried out.

High Modernist Planning

On the basis of this data, I propose that the current planning of Beijing is an expression of high-modernist authoritarian ideology according to Scott (1998). Prerequisites for high- modernist planning are as follows: "The first is the aspiration to the administrative ordering of nature and society" (Scott, 1998: 88); an aspiration which Scott termed high modernism. "The second element is the unrestrained use of the power of the modern state as an instrument for achieving these designs. The third element is a weakened or prostrate civil society that lacks the capacity to resist these plans" (Scott, 1998: 88–89). Modernist planning, then, can be summarised as "'clean-sweep' comprehensive planning" with an "emphasis on simplicity, order, uniformity and tidiness" (Taylor, 1998: 165, 166).

High modernism also highly values science and scientific progress (Scott, 1998: 93). Furthermore, "the logic of efficient planning from above for large populations requires […] that the number of values being maximized […] be sharply restricted—preferably to a single value" (Scott, 1998: 111).

Moreover, high-modernist planning comprises four main aspects. The first characteristic is "Total City Planning" (Scott, 1998: 104), or comprehensive planning. This means that all aspects of cities and their development in all levels of detail are subject to the plan.

The next feature is "Geometry and Standardization" (Scott, 1998: 107). Geometrisation is achieved through the layout of roads; standardisation is obtained through functional division and hierarchical layering, but also through replacing individually owned shops with retail chains. This socio-spatial reorganisation constitutes a form of population control.

For Scott (1998: 106), the prime model of high-modernist urban planning was Le Corbusier, who contends: "formal order […] [is] a pre-condition of efficiency." This needs to be contested, however, because "an urban order easily legible from outside […] has no necessary relationship to the order of life as it is experienced by its residents" (Scott, 1998: 58). Furthermore, outer tidiness does not necessarily bear any correlation with functional efficiency (Scott, 1998: 133). This is to say, ordering the environment will not order the system. Nonetheless, "planned functional segregation" (Scott, 1998: 109) makes planning easier because many complex realities can be ignored and there only needs to be a focus on exactly one function.

The third feature of modernist planning is "Rule by the Plan, the Planner, and the State" (Scott, 1998: 111). This implies a rather rigid, very hierarchical approach to planning that conforms to political goals more than to actual needs of the urbanites. Again, parallels can be drawn to Le Corbusier's planning: "Functional segregation was joined to hierarchy. His city was a 'monocephalic' city, its centrally located core performing the 'higher' functions of the metropolitan area" (Scott, 1998: 111). This is to say, the administrative hierarchy is being transformed into spatial reality. This is especially the case in national capitals, where the city serves as the administrative centre for the nation, the hierarchy of authority is strongly asserted, and the socio-spatial hierarchy is further solidified, again containing elements of social control.

The last characteristic is "the City as a Utopian Project" (Scott, 1998: 114), which works through social planning aspects and transformative aspirations. Transformative qualities form a part of modernist planning, because "integral, finally, to Le Corbusier's ultramodernism was his repudiation of tradition, history, and received taste" (Scott, 1998: 117). This notion manifests itself in the demolition of traditional-built housing in the name of progress, for example.

Institutionalised Mobilisation

Further, I propose that a form of campaign-style policy implementation called *institutional mobilisation* (White, 1990) is employed. Even though campaigns were the regular mode of implementation during the Mao era, since Mao Zedong's death, the Chinese leadership has developed its style in the direction of a more regular implementation process (Perry, 2011). Nonetheless, "managed campaign[s]" (Perry, 2011: 43) constitute a framework that is still employed today.

In the Mao era, campaigns comprised large-scale mass mobilisation, whereas today higher cadres are mobilising lower cadres to accelerate and deepen implementation (Kennedy and Chen, 2018; Perry, 2011). Additionally, specific population groups, such as alley stewards, are mobilised through mass media calls to help in governance and supervision (Feng and Wang, 2017; Jing, 2018).

Institutionalised mobilisation is a "specific form of postrevolutionary mobilization" (White, 1990). It includes intensification of incentives, regional variation, a limited timeframe, "practical results" as a goal, narrow mobilisation instead of mass mobilisation, and a defined target population (White, 1990: 62–63).

Urban Planning

Urban planning not only consists of the physical planning process, but also contains elements of social control (Abramson, 2006). Therefore, after the Chinese economic reform, from the beginning of the 1980s on wards, population growth has been controlled through urban planning measures (Gu et al., 2015). Today, policies aim, for example, at "significantly decreasing floating population employed in low-end

industries" (Fengtai District Development and Reform Commission, 2016) and thus these policies serve as the basis to expel part of those people from Beijing.

Because Beijing's population growth has already greatly exceeded the limits that were set in the previous urban master plan (Beijing Municipal Commission for City Planning and Land Resources Management, 2005), the city needs to find a way of coping with its ever-growing population in order to be able to develop sustainably. This is also in line with the 2014–2020 "National New-Style Urbanisation Plan" (国家新型城镇化规划, *guojia xinxing chengzhenhua guihua*), which stipulates strict population control for very large cities (more than five million inhabitants), while fully removing settlement restrictions in smaller cities (less than 500,000 inhabitants).

First and foremost, Beijing's government plans to reduce population by relocating people. This fits within a context of a high-modernist planning ideology, which strives to make the city more legible for the government and as such also more easily controllable. Through stricter control of the population, the government is able to further consolidate its power and through gentrification efforts in the city centre it is establishing spatial or even "cultural hierarchies" (Tomba, 2017).

In addition to creating hierarchies through relocation, urban planning in China is inherently hierarchical because of its close connection to greater regional planning. In the case of Beijing, planning is connected to Jing-Jin-Ji (京津冀, that is, Beijing–Tianjin–Hebei) and the Xiong'an new area (雄安新区, *Xiong'an xinqu*), much in line with the urban master plan's top–down approach. As Beijing stands at the top of this hierarchy, regional integration creates further opportunities to exploit its position (Gu et al., 2015). The hierarchical reordering into multiple layers of peripheries with different levels of distinction further aids in solidifying social stratification. Because of the trend to include ever larger units into the hierarchy (Shue, 2018), it can be projected that this type of socio-spatial population control will not only be applicable to single cities and city compounds, but rather to the whole country. That is to say, the planning process exhibits self-similarity, or, drawing on Borges, forms an "Aleph-like creation" (Soja, 1996: 158, fn. 9).

The government is employing different approaches to pursue these ends; most notably it is using regularised implementation mechanisms alongside campaign-style implementation, pointing to a "hybridicity" in planning instruments (Gu et al., 2015). Because the government stipulated the planning goals and implementation methods through a top–down approach, there was only very little public participation possible in their formation. Additionally, people who have to relocate often do not deem the solutions that the government provides for them acceptable. This tension between interests leads to the government resorting to coercive measures to implement its plans.

Even though there are a number of people endorsing these measures, forcefully relocating people and restructuring an area destroys the socio-spatial setup there. That means that grown societal structures are broken and supplanted by state-defined concepts. The urban master plan's goal of "livability" needs to be questioned then, as it is clear that the state, and not the people, has the ultimate power of defining livability.

Objectives of Current Urban Planning in Beijing

Even though the planning of cities has a long history in China, urban planning as a discipline only appeared recently. Contemporary urban planning aims at improving the living environment of city dwellers while drawing on different disciplines and approaches.

In the mid-twentieth century, urban planning in China was an expression of the country's socialist alignment and took the Soviet Union as its model. During this time, the top–down, two-part planning approach of master plan (总体规划, *zongti guihua*) and detailed plans (详细规划, *xiangxi guihua*) was established (Wu, 2015). After the Chinese economic reform (i.e. "reform and opening-up," 改革开放, *gaige kaifang*), the planning system became increasingly fragmented, and urban planning became subject to the overall economic growth prerogative.

Today, planners need to deal with the structural and physical legacies from that time, such as cellularisation and unequal development, creating tension with the progression towards global cities (Gu et al., 2015). These legacies notwithstanding, city building is still seen as a driver for growth (He and Wu, 2009; Tian et al., 2017), and the system is still fragmented due to the many parties involved in planning. Despite the two-part planning system still being in place, it is subverted through structural constraints and collusion between the government and developers.

Beijing's current urban master plan (2016–2035) (北京城市总体规划, *Beijing chengshi zongti guihua*, hereafter *master plan*) (Beijing Municipal Commission for City Planning and Land Resources Management, 2017) is based on the 2004–2020 urban master plan (Beijing Municipal Commission for City Planning and Land Resources Management, 2005). Work on compiling the current urban master plan began in 2014, after Xi Jinping's inspection of Beijing on 26 February, and the plan was finally accepted as per the official reply (批复, *pifu*) on 13 September 2017 (Beijing Earthquake Agency, 2017).

The master plan constitutes the top planning document for Beijing municipality and envisions Beijing becoming the national centre in four respects. Namely, these are the political centre (政治中心, *zhengzhi zhongxin*), cultural centre (文化中心, *wenhua zhongxin*), international communication centre (国际交往中心, *guoji jiaowang zhongxin*), and technological innovation centre (科技创新中心, *keji chuangxin zhongxin*). Most notably, however, it strives to reduce the population in Beijing municipality's centre and dispel non-capital functions (疏解非首都功能, *shujie feishoudu gongneng*) in order to attain this objective.

The master plan contains a set of forty-two numerical indicators against which its success is measured. They include population reduction in the six city districts, no further population growth in the municipality, and reduction of construction land, but also an increase in the number of patents and labour productivity.

The plan employs science as a guiding standard for the planning process, and as an evaluation and measurement factor during the development process (see Perry, 2011). This can, for instance, be seen from the third chapter, which is entitled "Scientific Allocation of Resource Factors, Realising Sustainable City Development" (Beijing Municipal Commission for City Planning and Land Resources Management, 2017).

These factors point to the high value that science has in the high- modernist planning process, as well as to high modernism's prerogative of total city planning. The findings then show a "mechanical" (Anonymous, 2018), utilitarian approach towards urban planning.

The scope of the master plan's comprehensive planning reaches up to the greater organisation of Jing-Jin-Ji Metropolitan Region. This type of grand-scale thinking is a salient feature of modernist total city planning, as mentioned above. Le Corbusier, as the paragon of modernist planning, wanted to correct not a "disorder at ground level but a disorder that was a function of distance, a bird's-eye view" (Scott, 1998: 106). The planners in Beijing, however, by expanding their scope to encompass hundreds of kilometres, have arguably already reached for a God's-eye view. This is very much in line with the trend of ever larger units of planning, as the 2010 "National Principal Function Zoning Plan" (全国主体功能区规划, *quanguo zhuti gongnengqu guihua*) exemplifies, which aims at planning the entirety of the Chinese territory by 2020 (Shue, 2018). Dividing the whole country into functional zones again betrays the high-modernist thinking that is underlying Chinese spatial planning processes.

By including Jing-Jin-Ji in Beijing's urban planning, a regional hierarchy is established. Moreover, inside the city as well, the socio-spatial hierarchy is affirmed: even though the master plan defines multiple centres, there is still a very strict hierarchy between the core area (核心区, *hexin qu*), central areas (中心地区, *zhongxin diqu*), edge groups (边缘集团, *bianyuan jituan*), and even more remote places. Moreover, by relocating non–national level government organs to the new secondary centre in Tongzhou (通州), Beijing is transformed into a Corbusian monocephalic city and further exhibits modernist functional segregation.

From these examples, it becomes clear that the master plan is embedded in a high-modernist planning ideology. Below, I will focus on its aspect of population control that follows neatly from the high-modernist aspiration to make the city more legible for the government (Scott, 1998).

Function Relocation Policy

As mentioned above, the state ultimately holds the planning power in the two-part process and uses top-level design to ensure compliance (for another example of population planning under top-level design, compare Alpermann and Zhan, 2019). That is to say, the detailed plans are directly derived from the master plan and follow a strict hierarchical order. Therefore, projects that are only outlined in the master plan are further specified in detailed plans. An example for such a subordinate project is the "Function Relocation, Renovation and Promotion" Initiative mentioned above.

In accordance with the master plan, this initiative chiefly aims at reducing the population density in the city centre. Beyond that, the FRRPI also ties back to larger and more general objectives. This can be seen from its implementation opinion (实施意见, *shishi yijian*), which states that the goals of the initiative are to "further promote the coordinated development of Beijing, Tianjin, and Hebei, strive to eliminate non-capital

functions, optimize and enhance the core functions of the capital, and accelerate the construction of a world-class harmonious and livable city" (People's Government of Beijing Municipality, 2017a). Overall, it is intended to "make the city run more orderly, make the city develop more efficiently, and make city life more convenient" (Jing, 2017).

Because one of the main objectives of the master plan is function relocation, and because the FRRPI as well sets out to relocate functions and people, it needs to be asked where these people and functions are supposed to go. In addition to the secondary centre in Tongzhou mentioned above, Beijing's districts Shunyi (顺义), Daxing (大兴), Yizhuang (亦庄), Changping (昌平), and Fangshan (房山) will serve as receiving places for people and non-capital functions after they are driven out of the city centre (Beijing Municipal Commission for City Planning and Land Resources Management, 2017: chap. 1, sec. 4, art. 17, cl. 5 and chap. 2, sec. 5, art. 36). However, in November 2017, a large amount of people, mostly without Beijing *hukou*, were evicted from Daxing as a reaction to the fire mentioned in the introduction. The fact that people were evicted from a place that had been designated to receive population reveals a state-led social hierarchisation that follows from its high-modernist planning ideology.

Thus, during the process of city reorganisation, certain groups of people will be ousted from the city, marginalised, and displaced (Wu, 2016). Marginalisation of groups belonging to the lower end of the socio-economic scale can also be substantiated in the case of the FRRPI: the last of the policy's points of action concerns the reconstruction of shanty towns, and clean-up and redevelopment of directly administered state-owned housing and "commercial changed to residential" housing (棚户区改造, 直管公房及"商改住" 清理整治, *penghuqu gaizao, zhiguan gongfang ji "shang gai zhu" qingli zhengzhi*). The reconstruction of shanty towns has been at the top agenda since at least 2014 (General Office of the State Council, 2014), but market-driven evictions had already taken place long before (Friedman, 2017). A prominent example of this is the ubiquitous practice of demolition and relocation (拆迁, *chaiqian*) (Hsing, 2010: 108–109). Even if market-driven evictions may not be "'forced' in the strictest legal sense, […] most of them are disruptive and unnecessary, and are causing the same impoverishment and destruction of housing investments and social support systems as 'forced' evictions cause" (UNESCAP and UN-HABITAT, 2008: 2). Whereas successful relocation includes "participation of members, physical development of the resettlement area, award of compensation, social development and consolidation of livelihood" (Li et al., 2015: 61), these aspects are largely not present in the case of the Beijing measures, as will be shown below.

While the government sees the reconstruction of shanty towns as development, it can be argued that "in almost every way, eviction is *the opposite of development*" (UNESCAP and UN-HABITAT, 2008: 8, original emphasis). However, this is primarily the case for the former inhabitants who were evicted, as discussed below. For the state, on the contrary, redevelopment constitutes "the last of the magical factors boosting housing sales" (Wildau, 2018: n.p.), further underlining the market-driven logic behind redevelopment.

Implementation Style

Because of its high-modernist underpinnings and top-down structure, the government resorted to coercive measures to carry out its plans, as can be seen from the Daxing evictions. I propose that the FRRPI is an example of down structure, the government resorted to coercive measures to carry out its plans, as can be seen from the Daxing evictions. I propose that the FRRPI is an example of institutionalised mobilisation. Because the FRRPI is implemented in a campaign style, it further challenges the proposition that the "transition from revolutionary consolidation to postrevolutionary rule" (White, 1990) is complete.

Institutionalised Mobilisation

The criteria for institutionalised mobilisation outlined above are met in the case of the FRRPI: the aftermath of the 18 November fire mentioned above constitutes a mobilisation effort that intensifies coercive measures in the context of Beijing's urban planning. The official investigation report, which was published on 25 June 2018, identifies "illegal construction, illegal renting, long-term existence of security risks" (Beijing Administration of Work Safety, 2018) as indirect factors contributing to the start and spread of the fire. Nonetheless, it also states that "the town government has failed to implement the responsibility for territorial safety supervision, and has inadequate supervision over illegal construction, fire safety, floating population, and rental housing management" (Beijing Administration of Work Safety, 2018: 13).Subsequently, it has been classified as a "major work safety responsibility accident" (Beijing Administration of Work Safety, 2018: 15).

This direct official criticism of the town government in the final report corresponds to the harshness with which the official organs handled the incident: they reacted with an initiative called "Large-Scale Inspection, Cleanup, and Rectification of Security Risks" (安全隐患大排查, 大清理, 大整治专项行动, *anquan yinhuan dapaicha, daqingli, dazhengzhi zhuanxiang xingdong*), which lasted for forty days, beginning on 20 November 2017 (People's Government of Beijing Municipality, 2017b). In theory, it aimed at managing the existent risks and problems, fulfilling the above criterion of having "practical results" as a goal. However, the initiative was perceived as an excuse to expel the "floating population" (流动人口, *liudong renkou*) and it was purported to be called "chasing away the 'low-end population'" (低端人口, *diduan renkou*) (*Beijing Youth Daily*, 2017). The government, however, denied having referred to the affected population in this objectionable way. Further, it has deemed this appellation "irresponsible and utterly baseless" (*Beijing Youth Daily*, 2017). Contrary to this denial, Fengtai District's current population development and control plan explicitly states: "The implementation of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei coordinated development strategy is conducive to the dispelling of low-end population [低端人口疏解, *diduan renkou shujie*] and the gathering of high-end population in Fengtai District" (Fengtai District Development and Reform Commission, 2016). Additionally, officials did expel migrants from their homes with just a few hours' notice, effectively rendering them homeless in the Beijing winter

with temperatures around freezing point (Buckley, 2017a), which definitely does not resemble any kind of respectful or responsible treatment.

At first sight, the "Inspection, Cleanup, and Rectification" initiative could be perceived as a direct reaction to the Daxing fire. However, seeing that the initiative wants to "integrate the 'Function Relocation, Renovation and Promotion' Initiative" (People's Government of Beijing Municipality, 2017b), a hierarchical relationship between the two becomes evident, reflecting high modernism's total city planning. Therefore, this initiative needs to be seen as a thin pretext to get rid of unwanted portions of the population, rather than as an answer to the Daxing fire. This view is shared by many of the migrant workers (农民工, *nongmin gong*) (Buckley, 2017a). An article in the Chinese Communist Party journal *Qianxian* (前线, *Frontline*) even states that "putting in order the environments of back alleys is also closely connected to the central work of dispelling population and low-end industries" (Feng and Wang, 2017: 83). In a larger context, these circumstances corroborate the fact that managed campaigns are "capable of impressive achievements yet entailing substantial human cost" (Perry, 2011).

Another hallmark of institutionalised mobilisation is that the efforts vary across regions. In the case of the 18 November fire, the consequences were very different across Beijing's districts: the city centre, for example Xicheng (西城) or Dongcheng (东城), only experienced rather mild repercussions in comparison to Daxing. This can be explained with Daxing's new role, because the master plan defines Daxing as one of the places to receive functions and population dispelled from the city centre. Consequently, there are incentives for the state to gentrify Daxing to make it more attractive for said population. This differential treatment is another expression of high-modernist hierarchisation, which places Daxing and its original inhabitants at a rather low level. It also results in very different perceptions of the same policy among the population, as I could establish through limited participant observation and conversations.

The efforts of institutionalised mobilisation are also limited in their time frame. The "Inspection, Cleanup, and Rectification" initiative was set to forty days, the FRRPI is envisioned to be finished by 2020, and the master plan sets its scope to 2035. This shows that the implementation takes place in short bursts according to its scope. In the case of "Inspection, Cleanup, and Rectification," it is even safe to say "shock attacks" (White, 2009: 107) (突击, *tuji*), even if it is upheld that dealing with back alleys has long become "regular work" (Feng and Wang, 2017: 83). This can be seen from initiatives starting to counter the *kaiqiang-dadong* (开墙打洞, "open a hole in the wall," meaning unregulated vendors selling goods from their windows) phenomenon in mid-2017 (Myers, 2017). These initiatives respond to high modernism's call for regularisation. Furthermore, even though Cai Qi (蔡奇) had been appointed as new party secretary of Beijing municipality only on 27 May 2017, the day after the Daxing fire, he personally called for "resolutely increasing cleanup efforts" (*Beijing News*, 2017: A6) and the city government was very quick to adopt correspondingly harsh measures (Friedman, 2017).

All three policies, that is, master plan, the FRRPI, and "Inspection, Cleanup, and Rectification," aim at producing practical results. This is not only a constituent of the classic "engineering" (White, 1990) type of mobilisation, but also of institutionalised

mobilisation. At the same time, there is a combination of economic and transformational goals, which resembles earlier campaigns (Perry, 2011).

The propaganda aspect has been minimised for the "Inspection, Cleanup, and Rectification" initiative. This is partly because the government's treatment of the migrant workers after the Daxing fire was met with strong public criticism (Jing, 2017), which, however, was suppressed quickly and news reports on the topic disappeared (Buckley, 2017b).

Implementation Rationale

It remains in question why the government chose to implement the urban plans using campaign-style implementation, even though today, "the 'Shanghai model' of urban renewal, characterised by large-scale demolitions and evictions, has become infeasible even in the non-democratic regime of China" (Ren et al., 2018: 96).

Due to the "contingent nature of political implementation" (Liu et al., 2014: 92), it is perhaps unexpected, but not surprising, that the government has turned to a campaign-style implementation for these policies. Even though there are no regular mass mobilisation campaigns anymore, "in the area of population control, […] campaign methods continue to be employed" (Perry, 2011). Therefore, the government did employ campaign methods when it aimed at regulating the floating population. Conversely, urban planning projects outside of population control, such as moving overhead wires underground to increase safety, were accomplished without such measures.

According to Kennedy and Chen (2018), there are two goals in using a campaign implementation approach: one is to quickly obtain a measurable result, the other is to show the centre's commitment to the policy. Another reason for campaign-style implementation is the shortage of time, as many of the goals set forth in the plans are scheduled to be reached in 2020, which is highly ambitious and therefore plans need to be implemented quickly and any hold-ups cannot be tolerated. This is also asserted by domestic analysts: "As the 2020 red line of population control in Beijing approaches, the pressure to mediate and disintegrate the population will continue to increase" (Li, 2017).

Another possible reason ties in with government power politics: If we accept "spatial rescaling [as] an outcome of conflict and […] state spatial selectivity […] as an instrument of crisis management" (Zou and Zhao, 2018), then the government's administrative upscaling to Jing-Jin-Ji and its relocation to Tongzhou indicate tensions in local–central power politics, leading to crass measures.

Implications of Urban Planning in Beijing

In the preceding sections, the theoretical framework for Beijing's urban planning and the subsequent implementation strategy have been described. This section portrays the new forms of social exclusion that result from high-modernist urban planning. These forms of exclusion include legal uncertainty, denial of free participation in the economy, discrimination on the basis of household registration, and evictions, as mentioned above. Due to the sensitivity of the topic at the time, I employed so-called guerrilla interviews

(see Solinger, 2006). In these interviews, I was able to survey several different facets of the discourse concerning the restructuring of Beijing.

A shop owner in Dashilanr (大栅栏) subdistrict with whom I had an hour-long conversation on 7 February 2018 told me about the fate of his next-door neighbour, who had run a noodle restaurant for more than twenty years. Even though this neighbour had still possessed both a valid lease as well as a business licence, he had been notified by officials to vacate the premises within two weeks. At the time of my visit, said noodle restaurant had already been closed down. The shop owner was in a similar situation and feared being evicted at short notice, especially given the background of the Daxing evictions. Consequently, he chose to preemptively close down his business in order to minimise his potential losses.

A sanitation worker in Xicheng, who is originally from Xingtai (邢台) in Hebei Province, expressed concern that the government would first expel workers without Beijing *hukou*, and then bring in workers from parts of Beijing municipality outside of the city centre to fill the gaps created. This way, while Beijing's population does decrease on paper, the government is merely shifting people around in reality. The logic behind this strategy strongly resembles redrawing administrative borders in order to virtually increase urbanisation, without any actual urbanisation having taken place (see Liu et al., 2015: 39).

People who are directly affected summarise their predicament with the expression *mei banfa* (没办法, one cannot do anything about it). Nonetheless, even among those who face severe life-changing consequences, such as losing the basis of their livelihood and having to relocate, there are voices subscribing to China's development and modernisation narrative. They are seeing themselves as the unlucky ones who have to make a sacrifice so that others may thrive, while at the same time still showing some amount of understanding for it.

Even though there is a discourse in public, "elements outside the state, such as public participation and civil society, are insufficiently developed" (Zou and Zhao, 2018). As such, there also is only a very limited influence that citizens may have on the policy-making process or the implementation of the emerging policies. In most cases, it is already too late for citizens to change the official stance, so their sentiment of *mei banfa* is somewhat appropriate.

This observation fits well with high-modernist planning ideology: its aspects of standardisation and formal order demand a rigidity that does not account for individual needs. Likewise, the hierarchical planning approach denies lower levels their voice and leads to new forms of social exclusion.

Even though the master plan wants to "achieve that people leave [Beijing] following the [dispelled] functions and industries" (Beijing Municipal Commission for City Planning and Land Resources Management, 2017: chap. 1, sec. 3, art. 14), in practice, it brings about many problems. From an economic viewpoint, the closest province, Hebei, is not as attractive as Beijing at the moment and thus enterprises and their employees will try to avoid having to relocate there (Zou and Zhao, 2018). From a societal viewpoint, it is problematic that the decision to relocate people and functions has been made

without public participation, which led to a very low willingness to leave Beijing (Anonymous, 2018). This low willingness to leave results in the situation that even though "the functions are not there anymore, the people are still there, and the people have not become less [either]" (Anonymous, 2018). That is to say, if nothing is done to increase the attractiveness of Hebei, even coercive measures will hardly be able to counter the labour market's influence. Nonetheless, due to factual constraints, many will have to leave even if they do not wish to do so, even if Kennedy and Chen (2018) argue that nowadays, implementation through campaigns may have positive effects that lead to policy acceptance and greater compliance.

On the other hand, young people make up the largest portion of the floating population, as, for example, in 2010, more than forty-three percent of it inside cities were between the ages of fifteen and twenty-nine (National Bureau of Statistics, 2012: 7-2a, own calculations, excluding population that is separated from their households within the municipal district). Therefore, Beijing is losing a lot by expelling these young people from the city, because "city development is reliant on young people – the labour force of young people" (Anonymous, 2018). This is confirmed also by Florida (2012: 306), who states that it is precisely young workers who are the "workhorses" of the communities.

The master plan only stipulates to "provide better opportunities for college and university graduates to start a business or seek employment in Beijing" (Beijing Municipal Commission for City Planning and Land Resources Management, 2017: chap. 3, sec. 5, art. 52). However, university graduates who will be left in Beijing are not willing to perform jobs, such as sanitation work or express delivery, that were previously done by those that are driven out of the city (Anonymous, 2018). Unsurprisingly, industries that are heavily reliant on migrant workers were facing problems since the evictions began (Friedman, 2017). This is also in line with the migrant workers' self-perception: "'How can Beijing get by without migrant workers? […] We do every job that the locals won't do'" (Buckley, 2017a).

A future problem ties in with the relationship between public service provision and the household registration system (户籍制度, *huji zhidu*). The current master plan aims to "establish a public service provision mechanism based on residence permits" (Beijing Municipal Commission for City Planning and Land Resources Management, 2017: chap. 1, sec. 3, art. 14, cl. 3). If this is thought through, even public transport could eventually be available only to those that hold a valid residence permit (居住证, *juzhuzheng*). This fits nicely with a migrant worker's impression that "'Beijing doesn't want us,'" even though "'We're all Chinese, this is our capital too, the people's capital'" (Buckley, 2017a).

The examples above show how the government's approach leads to problems in many areas, including societal, legal, and economic issues. High modernism's credo of "rule by the plan" in combination with coercive top-down measures not only largely ignores citizens' needs and violates their rights, it also creates unintended consequences that "push the state into schizophrenic behavior" (Friedman, 2017), leading to the eviction of people who are actually important to the city's functioning.

Conclusion

The Chinese government is not only using urban planning to improve the living environment of Beijing's inhabitants, but urban planning also serves as an instrument of population control. Population control is integrated into urban planning through a framework of high modernism and is implemented with the help of campaign-style institutionalised mobilisation. While urbanisation has largely been understood as a governance tool for growth, with research focusing on economic incentives for state-led urbanisation, this article adds that the state has governance incentives for urban planning. Specifically, the state is using exclusionary hierarchisation, where the incentives are not primarily economic, for social control and consolidation of state authority. Because of the focus on growth as a driver for urbanisation and the focus on the state entanglement in the land market, neoliberalism and state entrepreneurialism have been brought forth as interpretive frameworks. This article adds that high modernism helps in understanding the non-economic incentives and the resulting state behaviour. Finally, this article adds that campaign-style implementation is still used today, and that institutionalised mobilisation can be found as the measure employed in the Daxing case. This contributes another data point to the study of policy implementation and challenges assumptions that campaigns are a relic of the past.

Today, basically everyone is able to plan cities by using "plug 'n' play formulas [that] can be readily mastered by community activists and put to good use without sophisticated social science research" (Gleye, 2015). This kind of planning without the necessary expertise, however, leads to plans that do not account for anything beyond a cookie-cutter approach and lack consideration of their social consequences.

This observation is especially important in the light of the government's very own top-level guidelines of Putting People First (以人为本, *yirenweiben*) of Hu Jintao's Scientific Outlook on Development, or the newer People-Centred Approach (以人民为中心, *yi renmin wei zhongxin*) of Xi Jinping Thought. Moreover, evicted tenants in Daxing or the shop owner in Dashilanr experienced a legal uncertainty that needs to be contrasted with the government's proclaimed goal of fully advancing law-based governance (全面推进依法治国, *quanmian tuijin yifa-zhiguo*).

Problems include coercive implementation measures that destroy the source of livelihood, forced relocation, and destruction of social space as well as of historical and cultural heritage. Due to the nature of these problems, it is absolutely necessary to better include the public in the decision-making process for urban planning. Especially the affected inhabitants need to be taken into account, otherwise, top-down mechanisms will only lead to further dissatisfaction.

Arguably, in order to improve urban planning processes, the Chinese government could learn from its past experience with large-scale social engineering, for example the one-child policy. On the issue of the one-child policy, many of the problems present today, such as the 4–2–1 structure, have been foretold by social scientists, such as Liang Zhongtang (梁中堂), but were dismissed at that time (see Greenhalgh, 2008). Therefore, experts need to be tied in more firmly to foresee and prevent future problems.

While urban planning as a means for population control might yield positive short-term results, its long-term implications entail a massive social injustice. This circumstance reflects the campaign-style implementation and its underlying problems, once more. Because using urban planning for population control as such is questionable, policymakers need to turn to different strategies for tackling the challenges that are created through Beijing's large population. A high-modernist, one-dimensional approach to urban planning is not expedient in this case, and destruction of social spaces will turn the city into a lifeless and anonymous place. Eventually, a top–down, centralist approach will create focal points again rather than promote balanced, even development.

Nonetheless, judging from the Chinese practice of "proceeding from point to surface" (Heilmann, 2011) (由点到面, *you dian dao mian*), it can be assumed that the developments seen in Beijing will also appear elsewhere. Some fifteen years ago, Shanghai's Xintiandi (新天地, New World) was constructed through the Shanghai model mentioned above, that is, through relocation of inhabitants and large-scale reconstruction. In today's Xintiandi, one can only find "brand-name shops, cinemas, wine bars, nightclubs, and galleries catering to a wealthy clientele of tourists and locals" (Ren et al., 2018: 106), which shows that gentrification is one of the goals of city redevelopment (Tomba, 2017). Another instance of this practice can be found in Shanghai's former Rue du Consulat (now 金陵东路, *Jinling donglu*), mirroring the Beijing phenomenon (Knyazeva, 2016).

These past examples of state-led gentrification had an economic focus that approved evictions and that were focused on place-making in the lucrative city centre. While Beijing undoubtedly is also a case of this practice, it has additionally shown a strong push for population control leading to evictions in the periphery. The difference from these past examples is that population control follows so strongly from the urban master plan. Because the master plan is based on high modernism, it intends to render the city more legible to the government, which adds a dimension of population control to the policy, extending its powers. In the case of Beijing, this form of population control manifests itself as evictions accomplished through campaign-style implementation. This common basis thus yields a nexus of gentrification, displacement, and population control, following from the high-modernist framework.

If Beijing is an experimental point (试点, *shidian*) for using urban planning as a means for population control, then the extension of the set of instruments that was applied in Beijing could also be used in other megacities, such as Shanghai, where state-led gentrification can readily be found, or even in whole city clusters. This becomes even more important considering that Shanghai has also set quite an ambitious population target of twenty-five million in 2035, which, in the case of Beijing, arguably was one of the main drivers to expedite population control measures.

Lastly, it remains to be asked what alternatives exist to evictions as a form of urban planning. How could developments coming from urban villages (城中村, *chengzhongcun*), for example, be an alternative, more citizen-based model for city development that acts as a counterweight to the Disneyfication of cultural heritage? In order to realise sustainable development, future planning needs to include more public opinion and incorporate social justice. In its current form of using campaign-style implementation

methods with an underlying framework of high modernism, urban planning will only serve to create new forms of social exclusion.

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